



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
**730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476**  
**Phone: 781-316-3000**

**webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us**

## AHRC Meeting Minutes 11/20/2013

### Arlington Human Rights Commission Agenda

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Senior Center – Lower Level Conference Room

8:00 p.m.

Robin Varghese, Chair

Minutes

**Members Present:** Sheri Baron, Marlissa Briggett, Christine Carney, Douglass Davidoff, Stacy Davison, Ghanda DiFiglia, Mel Goldsipe, Sharon Grossman, Gary Horowitz, Nancy Rhoads (Vice Chair), and Robin Varghese (Chair)

**Members Absent:** Jorge Loayza and Nick Minton

**Others Present:** Kelly Bruneau (Admin), Adam Chapdelaine (Town Manager), Molly Flueckiger (Chair of Arlington Disability Commission) and James Nihan (Contract Administrator, Taxi Program Developer)

- **Citizen's Open Forum:** None.
- **Welcome New Commissioner:** Douglass Davidoff joined the AHRC. He is a four year resident of Arlington.
- **Paratransit Contract Administrator:** J. Nihan, Contract Administrator/ Taxi Program Developer presented on the many details of the taxi subsidy program proposed for residents requiring wheelchair accessible taxis with an projected implementation of early 2014. The program will encourage the use of American Disabilities Association (ADA) regulated taxis, decrease ride length, increase taxi accessibility to wheelchair bound residents, decrease the cost of each ride, bridge a gap in services from 3am to 7am, decrease misuse of paratransit service by only offering one way rides, increase the ease of electronic payment, train taxi drivers and dispatchers on the specifications of transporting a wheelchair bound passenger and challenge taxi companies to increase their liability insurance and inspection procedures. R. Varghese reached out to Arlington taxi companies and found that none have wheelchair accessible taxis that meet ADA regulations. R. Varghese will forward J. Nihan's contact information to Commissioners. M. Flueckiger will bring the information to the Disability Commission.
- **Discussion with Town Manager:** Town Manager A. Chapdelaine discussed recruitment of staff with diverse backgrounds, outreach to business owners with English as a second language and the increase in local Chinese population.
  - **Recruitment:** A. Chapdelaine stated that the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission pays attention to the diversity of job candidates and meets monthly with Human Resources to track the number of candidates. The challenge is how to locate and encourage more minority candidates to apply. N. Rhoads suggested that the town connect with the local National Association for the Advancement for Colored People (NAACP.) S. Grossman asked about retention of minority candidates in light of the last in first out standard. A. Chapdelaine stated that the largest departments in the town are Police and Fire and they must follow the last in first out procedure because these are civil service positions.
  - **Business Owners with English as a Second Language:** Recently business owners with English as a second language have run into trouble with taxi and liquor licensing. A. Chapdelaine stated that all business owners

come before the Board of Selectmen when they have violated a law and in these recent incidents, business owners seemed to understand that they had done something wrong but struggled with coming up with a satisfying solution for the Board. Suggestions for bridging the language gap were connecting with local

...satisfying solution for the town. Suggestions for bridging the language gap were connecting with local cultural groups, creating a list of town employees with language ability and connecting with local schools to discover what their interpreter services entail. S. Grossman pointed out that legal interpretation is not the same as a volunteer translator. R. Varghese asked if the town could look into legal interpreter training for volunteers.

- **Increase in Chinese Population:** A. Chapdelaine stated that the Council on Aging is offering Tai Chi, issues on aging classes and brought in a Mandarin Chinese interpreter for the flu clinic. A. Chapdelaine also noted that with an increase in Indian population, the Senior Center now has a Punjabi speaking employee and held a luncheon that over 60 Indian elders attended.
- **Correspondence received:** R. Varghese received Police Report, incident#13027746. A neighbor dispute with one neighbor blocking the other's driveway resulted in a racial slur being used. The police were called and the offender denied using the slur. The police filled a report and R. Varghese will forward to the Commission.
- **Subcommittee Reports:**
  - **School Liaison Program:** R. Varghese stated that he reached out to the Bracket School and plans to attend a PTO and staff meeting. S. Grossman stated that she was going to the Arlington High School on December 4, 2013. Concerns regarding not having brochures were discussed. M. Goldsipe is working on a new brochure. R. Varghese could not locate old brochures. N. Rhoads found a disk with the original brochure on it. She will forward to R. Varghese and he will upload files into Dropbox.
  - **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary/10 year anniversary of Marriage Equality/Bill Shea Every Day Hero Award:** C. Carney stated that room rental is \$75.00 per hour and this is the discounted rate. The room is reserved from 12pm to 5pm for a total room rental cost of \$225.00. This total does not include purchase of flowers.
  - **Dialogues Schedule:**
    - **Rescue in the Philippines :** C. Carney stated that it is \$1500.00 to rent the Regent Theater and the Commission decided this is too high a cost due to lack of funds. Possible solutions include waiting until next year and hold the event at the October International Film Festival, sharing funding with Community Education or finding another venue. C. Carney and S. Baron will research alternative venues.
    - **Miss Representation:** M. Briggett now has the film.

C. Carney made a motion to table items 9-12 due to it being 9:55pm. S. Baron seconded the motion.

- **Finances review**
  - **Review Last Year:** R. Varghese stated that the Commission ended up giving money back to the town and losing money out of the second account. He stated that since the books have closed, the Commission cannot get the lost funds back. The Commissioners discussed concerns regarding accounting areas with the previous Administrative Assistant's pay. R. Varghese will follow up with the Comptroller. N. Rhoads suggested that R. Varghese invite the Director of Health and Human Services to a meeting to clear up any budget confusion.
  - **Budget Update for this Year:** Discussed current line items in the budget.
- **October Minutes:** N. Rhoads moved to approve October minutes as amended and S. Davidson seconded. All absent from October meeting abstained.
- **New chair for 2014:** R. Varghese will be Vice Chair for next year. Commissioners discussed the possibility of having a system for electing chairs and the option of co-chairs. C. Carney is considering volunteering to be Chair for 2014.

G. Horowitz moved to adjourn meeting at 10:26pm. N. Rhoads seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Next meeting – Wednesday December 18th at 8 pm – NOTE: Health and Human Services conference room located in the senior center (27 Maple St )